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"Black people lived right by the railroad tracks, and the train would shake their houses at night. I would hear it as a boy, and I thought: I'm gonna make a song that sounds like that.

- Lillie Richard

"Railway guns" were used in both world wars.

These took huge naval guns, mounted them to a train, and used them to lob huge shells long distances, with the railcar often absorbing the recoil by kicking the whole thing backwards.

YOU SHOULD READ →

It got the Caldecott for a reason- the artwork is superb, and conveys wonderfully (what I imagine) how a train ride across the country in the mid-19th century might have been like (although a sanitized version- it is a children's book).

I have a soft spot for the Sierras...

hot take:

Amtrak should be nationalized and free (or at worst, a token fee). Significant money should be invested in rebuilding and expanding America's rail network.

Travel would be instantly accessible for everyone, small towns would be rejuvenated with their rail stations brought back, automotive pollution would drop, and security concerns from air travel would be much less of a factor. Communities would be transformed, and population centers could shift dramatically.

Youtube has a ton of footage of trains speeding through different countrysides, such as Norway or the Alps, often viewed from the cab. I find that such videos can be incredibly relaxing to have on in the background.

George Carlin narrating "Thomas the Tank Engine" still blows my mind. Ringo Starr I can completely understand, but Carlin is such an incongruous choice - not that he didn't do it well.

Apparently he enjoyed it a lot, and viewed it as a chance to show people "a different side" of him.

Mission accomplished, good sir.

Pullman cars were the height of luxury in train travel.

George Pullman further catered to his wealthy clientele by hiring newly freed slaves as his "Pullman porters" to act as passengers' servants.

They were uniformly called "George" by passengers (after George Pullman) as a throwback to slavery, were badly underpaid (when paid at all) and lived on tips. Racist abuse was common.

The porters also had to pay for their uniforms, meals and work supplies, and sleeping hours on overnight trips were deducted from pay. This was, sadly, considered one of the best jobs available to Black men.

TRAIN GAME ROUNDUP

I want to like this so much - it's basically what I'm looking for - drive the daman train through pretty scenery. Too bad the graphics are jerkingly bad in that scenery, and its pricing model for DLC is utterly ridiculous.

All DLC = $10,000.
I shit you not.

I do like the vibe of this one. → A sequel has been announced...

(This one comes closer, though)

I don't want to run a business, I want to run a train.

This is one I really want but only for a tiny 3DS screen is not optimal. There's a steam version I haven't tried, though.

I want trains, not overly Complicated Simcity Played in Spreadsheets.

disturbing trains

Miami ⟷ West Palm Beach (Brightline) has the highest per mile death rate in the US. Most are suicides.

Chennai ⟷ Rameswaram (India) Runs over a long bridge over the ocean that wobbles unpleasantly.

Thai ⟷ Burma "Death Railway" That's what they call it, as it killed many Allied POWs in its construction. It includes a bridge over the River Kwai...

Takamori ⟷ Tateno "Aso Minami" (Japan) Crosses an active volcano. Lava burns are visible on the route.

Trains of Cape Town (South Africa) Have a reputation for high crime (theft, assault, vandalism) that causes frequent cancellations.

Model Train Gauges (distances between outside rails)

NMRA standards - countries vary widely. (It's a real time and money sink, hence why I never participated)

発車ご案内
Train Departures
26
NOZOMI 160 12:30 Tokyo Non-Reserved Car No.1-3
This train stops at: Kyoto, Nagoya, Shin-Yokohama, Shinagawa
NOZOMI 20 12:37 Tokyo Non-Reserved Car No.1-3
This train stops at: Kyoto, Nagoya, Shin-Yokohama, Shinagawa
NOZOMI 164 13:30 Tokyo Non-Reserved Car No.1-3

Japan's Shinkansen bullet trains are incredibly efficient - delays are, on average, under one minute (and those often involve formal apologies). Extensive social engineering makes this possible - both on the part of the railway employees and on the part of the riders via understood expectations.

It did actually happen a few times in real life after that - life imitating art.

The "flying somersault to the train tracks" trope originated in an 1867 stage play called "Under the Gaslight".

(Lots of those come through this area.)

The amount of railway track in the United States peaked in 1916 at about 254,000 miles.

The Orient Express (full name - Venice Simplon-Orient-Express) is still around for luxury train fanatics, and can take you in style across Europe - if you can afford it - and if you have to ask, you can't.

A cabin on the 5-night Istanbul to Paris line starts at £38,000 per passenger...

Or you could take the 4-day trip across Kyushu on the luxurious "Seven Stars" line in Japan - those tickets start at only $5,400 each.

There are others as well, operated by Belmond - the "Andean Explorer", the "Royal Scotsman", for those who want a cruise without the water.